(b) and (c) A proposal was received from Indian History Congress for a grant of Rs. 1.5 lakhs for holding a Seminar on 'Akbar and his world' at Vishvabharati, Santiniketan as part of observance of Fourth centenary of Akbar's death and it was considered under the Scheme for Financial Assistance for Centenary/Anniversary celebrations by Voluntary Organisations. Under the Scheme, grants are normally given for celebrating Birth Anniversaries/Centenaries, hence no funds were approved. The decision is open to review/reconsideration.

Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourists

276. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a growing mis-match between the foreign exchange spent by Indian tourists abroad and dollars earned by the country from inbound tourists;

(b) whether the RBI has estimated the deficit in country's tourism earnings at 619.00 million dollars; and

(c) whether tourist arrivals in India recorded an all-time high at 3.91 million during 2005, surpassing the target of 3.8 million arrivals and if so, the reasons for lower net earnings for the year on inbound tourism?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) As per the latest yearly statistics provided by Reserve Bank of India, foreign exchange receipts from travel/tourism and payments by India during 2002-03,2003-04 and 2004-05 have been as follows. There has been a net earning of US$ 985 million during the year 2004-05:

In US$ million

Year	Receipts	Payments	Net
2002-03	3312	3341	(-)29
2003-04	5037	3602	(+)1435
2004-05	6495	5510	(+)985

(b) As per the information provided by RBI, the net earnings from travel/tourism for three months period July 2005 to Sept. 2005 have been

(-) US$ 619 million These are preliminary estimates and are likely to be revised when data for full year is available.

(c) Foreign tourist arrivals to India during 2005 has been estimated at 3.92 million compared to 3.46 million during 2004 showing an increase of 13.2%. The foreign exchange earnings from inbound tourists also increased to US$ 5731 million during 2005 compared to US$ 4769 million during 2004, showing an increase of above 20%.

Development of Tourism in Madhya Pradesh

† 277 SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme for development of tourism in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time-frame for implementation and completion of such Projects?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) There is no separate scheme for development of tourism in Madhya Pradesh. However, the Ministry of Tourism from Tenth Five Year Plan has been providing Central financial assistance to all States/Union Territories on the basis of projects prioritized in consultation with them for the following schemes:

(i) Tourist Circuits

(ii) Product Infrastructure and Destination Development

(iii) Large Revenue Generating projects

(iv) Fairs and Festivals

On receipt of the proposals, complete in all respect, these are appraised for assistance keeping in view *inter-se* priorities among projects, and availability of funds under the respective head. However, implementation and completion of projects sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism is the responsibility of the State Government.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.